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The Blind.

Occasional Paper. No. 19.

JULY 19th, 1902.

All communications for the next number must be sent on or before September 24th, to Mr. Henry J. Wilson, Hon. Editor, 53, Victoria Street, Westminster, London, S.W.

The Editor does not of necessity identify himself with opinions which may be expressed in the signed articles or in letters of correspondents, and the right is reserved of not printing any letter which may seem not to come within the limits of a discussion likely to be profitable. Letters must be accompanied by the writer's name and address, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith.

Copies of this Paper, price 3d. each, or 3½d. post free, can be obtained from the Editor.

EDITORIAL.

The April Conference has passed, and we much hope that great benefit will accrue from it to the Blind. Judging from many kind letters that have been received, it has presumably been a success. The papers were distinctly good and the discussions very helpful. We asked Mr. W. H. Dixson, M.A., to write an account of the Conference, and we think that in his article, which appears in these pages, he has summarised and criticised the chief points in a very concise and lucid manner. It is well to see ourselves as others see us, but, as the note at the head of this paper points out, we do not of necessity identify ourselves with opinions expressed in signed articles, and we can hardly be expected to agree with all the remarks in the present one! We are, however, very grateful to Mr. Dixson for undertaking, and so well carrying out, a rather difficult task. We should like to endorse especially what he says about the presence of so many blind experts and blind teachers, as they certainly gave great weight to the proceedings. The programme of the Conference was carried out in its entirety, with the exception of the paper by Dr. Hartley, who, we regret to say, was taken seriously ill, but his place was kindly taken by Dr. Rockcliffe at very short notice. Two of the Committees appointed, viz., the one on "Uniform Braille System," and the other on "Provision for 'defective' blind children," are

now hard at work, and we look for good results. The proceedings of the Conference were taken down in shorthand by Mr. Myers, and transcribed by him with great precision, in ordinary type, by means of a typewriting machine. All papers and transcripts of speeches have been submitted for correction to the respective writers and speakers. The official report will probably be published early next month, and copies will be sent to all those who have filled in an order form.

We know our readers will appreciate the Dean of York's eloquent panegyric (v. page 336) on the late Mr. Buckle, whose matured judgment and weighty counsel were much missed at the recent Conference.

We much regret that many questions of interest have been unavoidably crowded out of this number.

HENRY J. WILSON.

NOTES.

1. Our heartiest congratulations are offered to Mr. J L. Gardner, of Selwyn College, Cambridge, on being bracketed 32nd in the Mathematical Tripos last month. Mr. Gardner was a Gardner Trust scholar at the Worcester Blind College, where he received his early training, and also at Cambridge. Mr. Gardner intends to take Holy Orders, and is now going to the Leeds Clergy School for special preparation.

2. We sincerely congratulate Mr. G. T. M. Barker, of Queen's College, Oxford, on obtaining last month a first class in the Honours School of English Language and Literature. Mr. Barker was educated at Worcester Blind College, where he was a Gardner scholar, and also at Oxford.

3. We also heartily congratulate Mr. John F. Warden, of Keble College, Oxford, on obtaining 2nd Class in Honour Moderations last April. Mr. Warden is an old Scholar of the Worcester Blind College.

4. Mr. W. H. Dixson, the writer of the article on the Conference, took his M.A. degree at Oxford on May 17th. Mr. Dixson took 2nd Class Honours in Modern History, and was educated at the Worcester Blind College.

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5. The Rev. T. Barnard has left his curacy at Plymouth and gone to one at Paignton.

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6. The Rev. R. C. Swayne has left St. Peter's, Cranley Gardens, London, and accepted a curacy at Swanley, in Kent.

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7. A new edition of the pamphlet, "Information with regard to Institutions, Societies and Classes for the Blind in England and Wales," by Mr. Wilson, will be published at the end of this year or early next year. The last edition is now out of print. In the two editions, 6,500 copies of the pamphlet have been circulated.

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8. In the middle of August the British and Foreign Blind Association removes from 33, Cambridge Square, to 206, Great Portland Street. W. There is a Dussaud's writing frame on view at No. 33, and also some for sale. The price is 12/6 each.

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9. The International Congress for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Blind takes place at Brussels, from August 6th to 10th. The contribution of delegates is 8/- each. All communications should be addressed to Mons. L. Van Schelle, General Secretary, Ministry of Justice, Brussels.

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10. On Midsummer Day an old-established School for the Blind—St. George's, Southwark—closed its doors, as far as London is concerned, and now the pupils have been removed to the new premises at Leatherhead.

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11. Several blind pianoforte tuners in London have organised themselves into a Corporate Federation with a fixed centre, to enable the public to secure competent tuners, all

of whom hold certificates of efficiency from the Royal Normal College for the Blind. The Hon. Secretary of "The Blind Tuners Federation" is Mr. Arthur Robinson, 100, Gaisford Street, Kentish Town, N.W.

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12. A sighted lady or gentleman with a thorough knowledge of Braille is required at once to arrange and catalogue a large mass of unbound Braille MS, and to prepare a catalogue of an extensive library for the Blind. There is about three months' work. Applications stating remuneration required and full particulars should be addressed to B., c/o H. J. Wilson, Esq., 53, Victoria Street, London, S.W.

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13. "Morning," the new Braille magazine published in Adelaide, contains a highly laudatory review of "Maiden Verses" by Miss Matilda Aston, the only blind woman who has passed an University examination, and the only blind person who has done so in Australia.

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14. The Committee of the Bristol Blind Asylum have decided to close the Elementary Education Department, and in future to receive only those above 16 years of age.

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15. The extension of the buildings of the Bradford Institution for the Blind, at the estimated cost of £1,500, has commenced. The present buildings were erected in 1868 and there are 75 blind men and women now employed.

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16. The following books have been recently added to the Oxford free library: St. Mark in Gothic, etc., Glossary to Beowulf, Old English Grammar, Old English Glossary, Middle English Glossary, Specimens of Middle English, The Romance of Syre Gawain, Havelok the Dane, Piers Plowman, Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, Humphrey Ward's Selection of Poets after Chaucer, Wordsworth's Excursion, books IV and IX, Anson's Parliament (select chapters), Tacitus' Annals, books II and III, Cicero's Pro Cestio and De Oratione, McClymont's New Testament and its

writers, T. H. Green's Prolegomena to Ethics, first five volumes, Dicey's Law of the Constitution, first three volumes, Gardiner's Introduction to English History, volume II, Stubbs' English Constitution in 14th century, first six volumes.

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17. We have to thank Mr. Edward Watson, A.R.C.O., late music master at the Liverpool School for the Blind, for a copy of his "Braille" music-notation for the Blind. It is printed in Novello's Music Primers and Educational Series, and is a course of "lessons" drawn up for the use of "sighted" teachers of blind music students. The price is 7/6. A special edition in two volumes, embossed in Braille for the use of the Blind, is published by the British and Foreign Blind Association, price 2/6 each vol. The two editions correspond, as far as possible, with the order of lessons, so that the sighted teacher and blind pupil may use their respective copies *together* at the lesson. The well-known publishers are a guarantee that the book is thoroughly well got up, and Mr. Watson has spared himself no trouble to make the work of real practical use both to sighted and blind persons. There are very many examples of ordinary music transcribed into Braille.

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18. Requests have been made to the British and Foreign Blind Association to emboss in Braille the provisional recommendations of the new contractions committee. This will be done for 4/– each copy, post free, if 100 copies are ordered. Intending purchasers should write at once to the Secretary of the Association.

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19. Mr. Tadasu Yoshimoto, who kindly contributed to these pages an article on "Massage in Japan" in October last, and who returned to Japan last year, has published a book in Japanese, called "Shin Yei Koku" (the real England). Amongst the contents are "The Education and Employment of the Blind in England." Mr. Yoshimoto has kindly sent us a copy of his book, and, in a letter he wrote us, he says, "I am glad to tell you that I have lately received not a little encouragement on my proposal *re* the higher Education of the

Blind, and that my little book on the superiority of the Blind in England is now beginning to move some of our higher class Blind." We wish Mr. Yoshimoto all success in his philanthropic work in Japan, and shall gladly welcome him on his return to England next year, when he is coming to make further enquiries about the English system of educating the Blind.

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20. The new Government recently formed in Melbourne is remarkable, as it contains the first blind minister since Mr. Henry Fawcett. Mr. McKenzie is a keen debater and full of information. He has a most remarkable memory, and no one, hearing him speak for the first time, would imagine that he was blind.

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21. The new Australian Braille Monthly Magazine, called "Morning," has issued its first two numbers, and complimentary copies have been sent us. It is edited by Mr. Hendry, the blind Manager of the Industrial School for the Blind, North Adelaide, and the final sheet of the first number was printed by Lord Tennyson, who attended the proceedings in connection with the inauguration of the Magazine. The subscription is 12/- yearly. It consists of sixty pages, and is not interpointed. We recommend our readers to write Mr. Hendry and order the Magazine. It is full of interesting subjects.

THE LATE MR. A. BUCKLE.

On May 11th a memorial brass, erected to the late Mr. Buckle, in York Minster, was unveiled by the Dean of York, who uttered the following most eloquent panegyric, as reported by the *Yorkshire Herald*:—

"No memorial can reproduce to those who come after, the actual personality intended to be commemorated; they are but tokens of those who have lived and died, beloved and honoured by men of their own generation, in their estimation bright examples of what human life should be, and benefactors, in some degree, to those among whom they lived, or whom they professed

to love. As such we feel that a tablet to Anthony Buckle is not out of place in York Minster. Judged, even according to the noisy and somewhat incoherent clamour of the present day, he was a man whom all should delight to honour. For, if any, he was an ideal, and a true ideal of one who alike acquired and imparted true education. It is not too much to say that, whatever the measure of his intellect, it was soundly cultured. His knowledge was no mere superficial smattering of anything or everything, propounded with reckless assertion and leavened with acrimony and conceit. Whatever he had taken up he had mastered, so far as his ability permitted, and never ceased in his efforts to mature. His poetry was no mere slipshod combination of jangling rhymes, but the carefully expressed utterance of real poetic feeling and graceful and reverent thought. His illustrations, whether the outcome of his ready brush and pencil on paper, or the production of his graving tool on metal, showed that he had indeed acquired 'the harvest of a quiet eye,' and appreciated the mysteries of form, and shadow, and tincture in the world around him. His work, as a man of business, was correct and methodical, testifying to the same thoroughness of grasp and execution in all which he undertook, and all this was welded together, preserved from abuse, and rendered beneficent to those around him by the quiet unobtrusive faith and reverence which gave the tone to his character, and which he maintained to the end. And the secret of his success in educating and in dealing with others was the simple outcome of his success in educating and dealing with himself. Having borne the burden and heat of the day as a teacher in the school of this world and the school of Christ, he was able to sympathise with those who, perhaps, under what seemed to be special disadvantages, were striving to tread the hard and exhausting pathway of knowledge, and the narrow pathway of life. Having raised himself into the higher ground of true and sound education, his ambition was to lift up others to the same platform, where they might enjoy the same benefits for body, soul, and spirit. He was no hard master, no uncompromising pedagogue, manipulating the institution over which he presided as a mere factory, and treating the inmates as

mere 'hands' whose value was to be assessed by the amount of grist which they brought to the mill. In his estimation they were, each of them, what he was himself in his own frail human nature—gifted in some measure by a gracious God, and, as adopted children, brought into that close fellowship with Him which it was their highest interest to realise and enjoy. The divine and the human, the temporal and eternal, were not in his sight subjects alien from each other to be cultivated apart and used apart, but essential components of one great whole which was the joy of his own existence, and which he would fain make the joy of others. For as such it made his life, as far as human life can be in spite of the many cares and anxieties appointed for him, a happy life. 'A conscience void of offence towards God and towards man' was the tone of his personal life; 'not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord,' the tone of his public life. The respect and affection of all who really knew him leavened his social and domestic life, and when the Master called He found him ready. 'His body is buried in peace,' but his name liveth if not for evermore, yet nevertheless in the hearts and memories of his fellows and companions who survive him, who testify here their grateful recognition of his life and work, place this memorial on the second anniversary of his death, close to that of his respected patron and fellow labourer, with whom he is now in the paradise of God, and pray that God will raise up many like him to be the example and the solace of His people in the days which are yet to come."

The brass was then unveiled by the Dean, who read the inscription as follows:—"In loving memory of Anthony Buckle, B.A., for thirty years superintendent of the Wilberforce School for the Blind in this town. A graceful poet, an accomplished artist, a devout Christian, a sincere philanthropist, especially of those committed to his charge, for he was truly eyes to the blind, this tablet is erected by those who appreciate his work and cherish his memory.—June, Anno Domini, 1900."

The pupils of the Blind School sang, with great expression, William's anthem "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace," and

the Dean having pronounced the Benediction the ceremony concluded.

INSTITUTIONS AND SOCIETIES.

Bangor. The Nineteenth Annual Report of the Bangor Home Teaching Society for the Blind (Mrs. E. A. Young, Tan y Bryn, Bangor, *Hon. Sec.*) shows that on July 1st last there were on the books 249 blind persons, who were visited by two sighted teachers, the number of visits being 953. There are 648 volumes in Welsh in the library, some in Braille and some in Moon's type.

Birkenhead. The Birkenhead Society for providing Home Teaching for the Blind has been in existence three years. The report for 1901 shows distinct growth in the Society. The blind teacher has paid 1995 visits, and on December 21st premises were taken at 2A, Ridley Street, with the object of starting a workshop. At first, work has been started with two looms for matmaking, but it is also intended to employ blind basketmakers and chaircaners. There are 139 blind persons on the books.

Bristol. The General Annual Meeting of the Bristol Asylum, instituted 1793, was held at the Asylum, Queen's Road, on May 7th, when the Lord Mayor was in the chair, and the report for 1901 was adopted. On December 31st there were 21 male, 8 female pupils above 16 years of age, and below that age 23 male and 18 female, making a total of 70. It has been decided to no longer undertake the education of blind children under the age of 16, but those now in the Asylum will be retained until December 31st, 1903. There are 18 out-workers to whom £507 were paid in wages. The legacies amounted to £992, and the sales to £1,337. The Kempe Trust provides four pensions of £2 10s. a year, and six of £4 10s. The endowment of the Asylum produced an income of £1,508 last year.

Bristol. The Forty-third Annual Report of the Association for Home Teaching and Industrial Employment of the Blind was read at a meeting held at the Institution, 65A, Park Street, on February 25th, when the High Sheriff (Admiral Close) presided. In the Home Teaching Branch three blind teachers are employed, who pay on an average 3,000 visits, and give about 400 lessons during the year. In the Industrial Branch only girls are employed, and the work is disposed of in a shop, at an annual sale, and by means of two saleswomen who go from place to place with baskets of work. The sales during 1901 amounted to £512 and £238 were paid in wages to the Blind. There was a legacy of £100. Attention is drawn, in the report, to blindness caused by inflammation of the eyes in newborn infants.

Cardiff. The Thirty-seventh Annual Report of the Cardiff Institute for the Blind was presented at a meeting held on February 13th. The sales during 1901 amounted to £2,121 and £886 were paid in wages. There are 22 men employed (18 basketmaking and 4 matmaking) and 5 women who are engaged in sewing, knitting and chaircaning. The Institute has no endowment of any kind. The Shand Memorial Aid Fund provides annuities to the aggregate amount of £37 10s. The report is well illustrated and gives most necessary precautions in regard to prevention of blindness.

Liverpool. The Report for 1901 of the School for the Indigent Blind, Hardman Street, and the Wavertree Branch School has been issued. This Institution, founded in 1791, is the oldest school for the Blind in the world with the exception of the one in Paris. The school at Wavertree is solely for those under 16 years of age, and had an average of 73 pupils, 42 boys and 31 girls. We are pleased to see that a sum of £3,468 and several annual subscriptions have been received for "The Old Pupils' Fund," started by the President, Mr. Wade Deacon. Would that a similar fund were started in connection with all schools! Fifteen pupils attended the examination of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, and all passed, six with

honours. The sales amounted to £1,104, and there were £200 in legacies. Twenty-five pupils were admitted last year into the Hardman Street School, and there was a total of 92 (56 males and 36 females).

Liverpool. The Annual Meeting of the Catholic Blind Asylum, 59, Brunswick Road, Liverpool, established in 1841, was held on May 26th. Reference is made in the Report for 1901 to the opening of the new branch School at West Derby, Liverpool, in August last, by Cardinal Vaughan. There is a mortgage debt on it of £8,700. At the close of the year there were 188 inmates, of whom 70 were children. The Institution is in charge of the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul. £275 were received in legacies towards the new building Fund, and the net proceeds of the annual bazaar amounted to £697.

London. The Association for Promoting the General Welfare of the Blind, 258, Tottenham Court Road, London, W., has published its Report for 1901. The Association was founded in 1856 by Miss Gilbert, the blind daughter of the then Bishop of Chichester, for the purpose of teaching trades to, and employing, the adult blind. Pupils must pay 6/- a week for instruction in basket-making, and 4/- a week in other trades. There are 18 pensioners, 37 brushmakers, 29 basketmakers, 10 chaircaners, one matmaker, one carpenter, and five firewood-makers, thus making 101 men and women benefited by the Association. The amount paid in wages was £1,924, and in pensions £322. The brushmakers earn from 5/- to 22/-; basketmakers 10/- to 35/-, chaircaners 4/- to 11/-, woodchoppers 9/- to 19/6, and the matmaker 17/6 per week. There is a Sick Club managed by the blind workers. The loss on the trading account was £1,074, the sales amount to £11,529, the legacies to £1,482 and the grants to supplement wages to £350.

London. The Indigent Blind Visiting Society, 8, Red Lion Square, London, W.C., instituted 1834, has issued its Report for the year ended March 31st. There are 614 cases on the books, who are visited by 11 blind men. Classes are held in six centres. £814 were received in legacies. A great

many teas, entertainments and excursions were provided for the Blind by kind friends of the Society.

London. The London Society for Teaching the Blind to Read and for Training them in Industrial Occupations, 10, Upper Avenue Road, Swiss Cottage, N.W., instituted 1838, held its Annual Meeting on April 26th. In the Report for 1901 there is a very interesting account of the growth of the Institution up to the present time. During the last year there were 67 pupils (35 girls and 32 boys) on the books. The Report is illustrated with photographs, which are very clearly reproduced. The Legacies amounted to £1436. In the printing department, "The British Empire," by Professor Meiklejohn, has been embossed in Braille.

London. The report of the School for the Indigent Blind, St. George's Circus, Southwark, S.E., for the year 1901 is published. The school was instituted in 1799. A short account is given of the new schools now being built at Highlands, Leatherhead, Surrey, and reference is made to the surrender of the lease of Linden Lodge, where the Junior School was held. In the Industrial Department there were 44 males learning basket making and chair-caning, 15 mat-making, 23 brush-making, and 10 pianoforte-tuning, and 16 females learning automatic knitting, 18 brush-drawing, 31 chair-caning, 12 sewing machine, and 11 sash-line making. Thirty-five adults were employed in the workshop and the wages amounted to £1,126. The sales realized £3,344. Twenty-two persons receive annuities from funds bequeathed to the School for such purpose. The legacies last year amounted to £4,212. The report is illustrated with several photographs and gives full information about the election of pupils, who are now admitted up to 26 years of age, free of all cost.

Northampton. The Report for 1901 of the Northampton and County Association for promoting the general welfare of the Blind, 32, Newland, Northampton, states that there are 13 blind workmen employed in the workshops, and that the sales amounted to £982, as against £654 in 1900. The loss

was £139, against £248 in 1900. The wages amounted to £477. The Society received a legacy of £10, and has been in existence three years.

Norwich. The Report for 1901 of the Asylum and School for the Indigent Blind, Magdalen Street, Norwich, is published. The Institution was established in 1805, and rebuilt in 1889. The elementary school was closed on March 31st, 1901, and now no children under 16 years of age are admitted to the Institution. In the technical school there are 9 male and 8 females. In the Asylum 5 males and 9 females There are 9 non-resident journeymen. Total, 40. There are several vacancies. The legacies during 1901 amounted to £1,368, the sales to £555, and wages paid to the Blind to £152.

Plymouth. The Forty-second Annual Meeting of the South Devon and Cornwall Institution for the instruction and employment of the Blind, North Hill, Plymouth, founded 1860, was held on April 2nd, when Mr. Duke, K.C., M.P. presided. On December 31st, 1901, there were 68 blind persons on the books (44 males and 24 females) of whom 47 reside in the Institution and 21 with their families. The sales amounted to £1,457, and £433 were paid to blind workmen. Legacies amounted to £384. There are 20 children in the school.

THE RECENT CONGRESS.

The Congress which met at the Church House, Westminster, in April last, is one which will be long remembered, not only by those who took part in it, but, it is to be hoped, by the generality of the Blind. Though but the last of some half-dozen gatherings of the kind, it is perhaps the first in which those for whose benefit it was convened, have been so largely represented. Probably no blind person whose opinion was worth having was refused an invitation, and the committee and secretary of the Gardner's Trust demonstrated thus clearly their grasp of the principle that much of the work done for the Blind must be done by the Blind.

Not that we ought to minimise the help which "Sighted" people give and have given. The average blind man is not blest with a large share of the world's business capacity, and the seeing members of the Congress were able to bring their experience as managers and organisers to bear upon many who would have left its deliberations in the clouds. But no one knows where the shoe pinches so well as he who wears it, and much money has been wasted in some fields, whilst others have been sadly overlooked, simply from a neglect of this one trite fact. The representative character of the Congress was doubtless largely due to its having been summoned, not by an individual or an interest, but by an organisation, one of whose chief functions is to obtain information concerning the Blind. Had such an assembly been brought together by a blind man, there would perhaps have been an insufficiency of "sighted" members; had it been called by the committee of a local Institution, the Blind would not have been amply represented.

So much for the composition of the Congress; we now come to its proceedings.

It opened on April 21st with a service in Belgrave Chapel, Belgrave Square, in which prayers were recited by the Revs. H. J. R. Marston and A. J. Young, the Rev. R. C. Swayne read the second lesson, and the Rev. N. F. McNeile preached a thoughtful sermon, which struck the right note by insisting that each of us had his work to do. The Organist and Choir, all Students, past or present, of the Royal Normal College, rendered the music in a manner which left nothing to be desired.

The actual business of the Convention began on the morning of April 22nd, with Earl Egerton, of Tatton, a member of the Royal Commission appointed to enquire into the condition of the Blind, in the chair. After welcoming the Congress in suitable terms, he called upon the Rev. H. J. R. Marston to read his paper on the "Higher Education of the Blind." Mr. Marston dealt in an interesting manner with the great work done in this cause by the Blind College, Worcester, eight of whose students made up their minds thirty years since to go to the university. He dwelt on the scarcity of Higher Literature for the Blind in

1872, but somewhat overshot the mark when he declared that there were no historical books at that date. When the writer of this article was a boy, he held in his hands "A brief outline of English History," by the Rev. B. G. Johns, which had been embossed in the sixties by the St. George's Blind School. This was not an important contribution to literature, but we ought to beware of belittling the work of our educational ancestors. Mr. Marston was unable to find many to agree with him when he declared that a blind scholar who is reading Greek should know the original shape of the Greek letters. The opinion is interesting, as coming from a blind scholar. The reader of the paper proved that the Blind are qualified for almost all the higher professions. His remarks on their fitness for positions in the Church were especially interesting, and it might be of some service to his confrères if he would enlarge them into a pamphlet for circulation among the Bishops, pointing out, *inter alia*, why he thinks they should undergo a two years' Diaconate. But he was on somewhat controversial ground when he declared that a blind teacher could conduct a class of "sighted" boys. If however, this opinion is the result of personal experience, it should not be overlooked. A discussion followed, of which some of the points have been already referred to. Mr. Wilson of the "Gardner's Trust" struck a warning note. He expressed a fear lest blind men should seek Holy Orders because they knew of no other means of earning a living, and said that during the last few years he had been applied to by more than one man who had obtained honours at a university, for funds with a view to a theological education. But is not Mr. Wilson unduly pessimistic? Of nine blind persons who have left Oxford with honours during the last seven years, five are actually earning a living, one is articled to a solicitor, one is training for the Dissenting Ministry, with an assured prospect of success, and it is probable that the other two could maintain themselves if called upon to do so.

Mr. Sharpe's paper on "the education of persons going blind after the age of 16," was sensible and sympathetic. He pointed out that the first thing to be done, was to give such persons courage. The discussion rambled considerably, for

none could disagree with Mr. Sharpe's opinions. But it is always to be borne in mind that we were not taking part in the disputations of a Debating Society, but attempting rather to arrive at conclusions by the co-operative distribution of information.

In the afternoon the Chair was taken by Mr. A. C. Cronin. Dr. Campbell set forth his well-known and admirable views on the physical training of the Blind. By the way, would it not be possible for those who adjudge the Fawcett Scholarship to take account of proficiency in some form of sport?

The subject of the second paper was "the treatment of the 'defective' Blind," and was handled by Mr. Loch in such a way as to arouse the interest of all. The number of these unfortunates is greater than many would suppose. Whether they should be taught in special Institutions appears to be widely questioned, and those who convoked the Conference may be congratulated upon their tact with regard to this and all the other subjects submitted for discussion. No resolutions were allowed to be put, for it was felt that, though the members were mostly experts, it was best that they should simply find out what really were the burning questions. We may therefore hope for something from the Committee chosen to consider the subject of the 'defective' Blind.

On Wednesday morning, April 23rd, Mr. Stainsby, of Birmingham, read a paper on "Occupations for the Blind," and after hearing his fine organ of a voice, one could hardly wonder that Birmingham people were musical. The question raised was, not whether blind persons could be taught this or that trade, but what trades were likely to be suited to the mass of such persons. This was made the more clear in the course of the discussion, wherein great difference of opinion was manifest with reference to mat-making, regarded by some as the most, and by others as the least, remunerative of occupations carried on in Institutions. It was gratifying to find all agreed that the best machinery must be used in a workshop. Where, on the other hand, experts are not unanimous as to the use of moulds in basket-making, it would be absurd for a mere student to discuss

the point. It is, however, evident that any contrivance which would enable the Blind successfully to compete with other people, has a *primâ facie* claim to consideration. One speaker, himself blind, told how successful he had been, as a middleman, in the basket trade, and the assembly was made to feel that, in matters pertaining to the Blind, business capacity was absolutely requisite. Such a reminder was shown to be well-timed when Dr. Power rose to advocate the claims of an establishment for training and employing the Blind as masseurs. If "sighted" people are convinced that they can be treated in this way as well, or better, by the Blind than by others, they will employ the Blind; but it is a long time before prejudices are broken down. The experience of tuners has been of a similar kind. There is no doubt that blind certificated tuners are more efficient than most others sent out from music warehouses, because the latter have not been properly trained, but the public are only now beginning to find this out.

Mr. Stainsby pleaded for some form of remunerative labour for women deprived of sight. He may be interested to know that some years ago the question of their making cardboard boxes was mooted in Adelaide, but I do not know whether it was actually tried. Mr. Stainsby's own contribution to the means of employment for the Blind is no mean one. Mr. Myers took a verbatim shorthand report of the Conference, and the ticking of his Braille-writer could not have disturbed the deliberations of a "Cabal."

The Rev. St. Clare Hill, of St. George's Blind School, in his paper on "The Management of Workshops," laid it down as an axiom that the relations between a Manager and the blind employés of a workshop must be of a strictly business character, and denounced any addition by way of charitable supplement to the wages of the workers. He admitted that many blind persons would be unable to live on their earnings, but urged that the deficiency should be supplied, not by the Manager, but by an outside Society. He spoke from the experience of an Institution which had formerly tried an opposite plan, and had found that it tended to pauperise the workers; but, in the course of the

discussion, some speakers showed that they had failed fully to grasp Mr. Hill's position, and imagined that he wished to see all aid denied to blind persons except the bare wage, which was paid by the Manager. In other words, the question to be decided was the channel from whence monetary help should come, not the amount of that help. It is possible that many would eventually find themselves more in agreement with Mr. Hill's views than they had at first supposed. The time was too short for all who wished to take part in the discussion to speak. In the afternoon Lord Kinnaird presided, and the first business was the reading of Mr. Hirst's paper on "the need of more, and cheaper literature for the Blind." We have heard of a certain book called, "Sesame and Lilies," which has nothing to say either about Sesame or Lilies; but we have never before heard of an essay whose matter was opposed to its title. We thought that Mr. Hirst was about to demonstrate "The Need of more and Cheaper Literature in the Braille type," but we were treated instead to a Psalm of thanksgiving for the copious and cheap literature already existing in that type. In other words, those interested heard nothing which they did not know before, nor any opinions which they could either accept or controvert. It is, however, only fair to say that Mr. Hirst was prevented by illness from being personally present, so that he was unable to throw any light upon the discussion which followed.

Miss Moon's paper, on "The Need of more and Cheaper Literature in Moon's Type," was a powerful appeal for funds to carry on the work which is being done by Moon's Society. It is at least time that the relative positions of Braille and Moon were defined and, what is of more importance, recognised. The members of the Congress appeared to be divided on this point. Some declared that Braille was the only system, and that it could be learned by anybody. Among these was Dr. Campbell. The attitude taken up by Moon's Society seems to be that the system which they advocate is the only one, and that all others are heterodox. But we have to ask ourselves, what is the opinion of home teachers and visitors of the indigent Blind?—that is to say, of those who, being blind themselves, have had to do with

the least intelligent of their fellows. They say that we must not base our opinion upon the judgment either of a man whose chief occupation has been the education of the young, or of a Society which has inherited its traditions from the inventor of a system; that it is not a question of what blind persons *can* learn, but what they *will* learn; that if, as Mr. Sharpe said the day before, persons who become blind in later life need in the first place encouragement, it is a mistake to bring them face to face with a system containing letters which bear not the slightest resemblance to those which they have been accustomed to read, and contractions difficult to remember; and that when people of this calibre have mastered the Moon System, they are often, though not always, induced to take up Braille. On the other hand, they point out that there must always be vastly more literature in Braille than in Moon, on account of the greater cheapness of printing and the existence of the writing-frame, as well as of contractions which save space; and that a blind person, when well practised, enjoys the reading of literature with abbreviations, for he can actually read it more quickly, as a greater number of words pass from the finger to the brain, and a power of reading largely by context is acquired.

The discussion made it thus evident that each system has its place, and it would be greatly to the advantage of the Blind, and of Moon's Society, if the latter were to form an alliance with the British and Foreign Blind Association, so as to bring the claims of both more prominently before the eye of the general public, and put the allied Societies into possession of larger funds.

Could not the Committee which has been appointed to discuss the feasibility of a uniform Braille system consider this suggestion, and attempt to unite the parties concerned?

The best paper, from a literary point of view, was read by Mr. Illingworth, who set forth the need of a uniform Braille system. But, from the nature of the case, his matter was of a somewhat ephemeral description; yet he has done a great service to the Blind by ventilating the subject. An attempt was made some years ago to introduce changes by means of what

was called the "Hora Jucunda Union," to effect reforms in the English Braille System, but it failed to gain the co-operation of the British and Foreign Blind Association, which represented, in theory, the Blind in general, and objected "to a full-grown man being adopted by a child," particularly as it suspected that the movement was an attack upon itself. The formation of the "Hora Jucunda Union" was an honest attempt to obtain a consensus of opinion concerning Braille, but a local Institution can rarely do anything in this way, because the average man is so apt to scent self-advertisement even where it does not exist. Even the British and Foreign Blind Association has failed to accomplish anything through its Contractions Committee, owing to internal dissensions among its members. The offer of the Bible House for the deliberations of a brand-new Committee, which should thresh out the whole subject, has been welcomed with demonstrations of gratitude by the Congress, and, as this Committee will represent the generality of the Blind, and will at the same time consist of experts, we may hope that English Braille will be settled "upon the best and surest foundations."

It was interesting, during the debate on this subject, to hear Mr. Murray and Mr. Knowles discourse on the manner in which Braille had been adapted to the Chinese and Indian languages. As Mr. Knowles seeks to unify Braille for the purpose of Oriental languages, it is fitting that we should beware of revolutionising English Braille before consulting experts in those continental countries where the letters are the same as those used in English.

On Thursday, April 24th, Mr. W. S. Seton-Karr expounded the policy of the Gardner's Trust relative to pensions and Homes for the Blind, with which those assembled found nothing to disagree. Mr. Wilson asked the important question, whether it would not be possible for some of the pension societies to relax the rule that their beneficiaries must not have received poor relief, particularly as, owing to recent statutes, that relief may often have taken the form of a maintenance grant to a blind child while at school. The Registrar-General's paper on "statistics concerning blindness" was not so full of figures as to confuse the listener; and it is pleasing to know that the number of blind persons

per million has probably decreased from 879 to 788. Although this decrease must be largely attributed to the increase of medical skill, it is doubtless also due to the growth of cleanliness among the poor.

The Registrar-General was subjected to a minute cross-examination as to what was meant by "Blind" in the census returns, his reply being that he meant "totally Blind." Now, as a matter of fact, only the word "blind" is to be found on the census paper, and there could be no question that some persons who are virtually blind are not included in the returns. The Registrar-General promised to give the question of the classification of the Blind his serious attention, but warned his hearers that the accuracy of a census was in inverse proportion to its minuteness, owing to the unwillingness of some, and the unfitness of others, to answer the questions.

Much interest is sometimes aroused by the list of the occupations of the Blind as stated in census returns, but Dr. Armitage long ago pointed out that those who filled them up often failed to distinguish between the business carried on by a blind person at the present moment and that in which he was associated before loss of sight. No wonder, therefore, that surprise should be caused by blind men being returned as painters and photographers.

Of Miss Bainbrigge's paper on "Home Teaching Societies," full of sound common sense, little need be said, as much of its matter concerns the "Battle of Types," which had been fought the day before. But it was fortunate that she laid so much stress on the necessity for employing blind teachers, and specially those who have lost their sight rather late in life.

After all, it must be borne in mind that all pity is not sympathy, nor is all sympathy pity, and this fact is just what the well-intentioned sighted man often fails to see.

In the course of the morning's meeting an Irish delegate pointed out, most assuredly to the astonishment of most Englishmen present, that the provisions of the Education Act dealing with the Blind and Deaf, had not been extended to Ireland. Could not a deputation of the Congress approach the Government with a view to having this shocking state of things remedied?

After the adjournment for lunch the last meeting of the Conference took place. The circumstances of this Convention were such as to make it fitting that Mrs. Fawcett should preside at one of its meetings, but the embarrassment of some who were not used to a lady in the chair was amusing enough.

Mr. Tate, in a clear and concise paper, set forth the scheme for a Central Bureau, which should collect information with regard to the Blind. There is no question of the necessity of such a Bureau, and, in the course of the discussion, one speaker read out quite an examination paper, drawn up before 1870, by which he intended to test the efficiency of such a body if it were established. But there is at the same time no doubt that the Committee of the Gardner's Trust is in possession of the machinery for such work. Mr. Wilson pointed out that there was a feeling abroad that his Committee was possessed of boundless funds and that he had nothing to do, but this fact does not dispose of the main contention. It would surely be possible to charge a small fee for every question asked, or an annual subscription for membership of the Bureau, and the Committee would thus be able to do with greater ease much of the work which it has already undertaken There appeared to be some who have long looked upon Mr. Wilson as being an Information Bureau in himself. Long may this state of things continue!

The question of a uniform method of keeping accounts is not so easy to settle, but it might be arranged that an Institution should keep double accounts for one year, and after that, accommodate its methods to those of a similar establishment.

Dr. Brudenell Carter's paper was a complete survey of the subject which he took in hand, namely, "The Prevention of Blindness," by a man whose knowledge and surgical skill is unsurpassed. And for this reason, the majority of his hearers could only put themselves into the position of learners. But the prevention of blindness is so vital a matter that anyone who has time and money could hardly employ it better than by distributing a pamphlet on the subject throughout the United Kingdom.

Dr. Brudenell Carter denounced the special hospital, as taking away from the ordinary medical student much of the

experience which he would otherwise gain in a general hospital. And the existence of, say, an Eye Hospital, must be an even greater mistake in a smaller town where the funds at the disposal of the general institutions are necessarily limited.

After the paper had been read we were told that boys living in towns had shorter sight than those in the country. This is a somewhat interesting reflection on the evils of modern town life.

A paper was to have been read on the "Intermarriage of Blind Persons," but Dr. Hartley was too ill to prepare it. A discussion upon the subject was therefore opened by Dr. Rockliffe, who pointed out that unions of this kind were indeed to be deprecated, specially among the poorer class, (1) because blind couples were liable to keep a dirty house, and (2) as their children were reduced to becoming their guides, these young people were likely to pick up much that it was undesirable they should know. But at the same time he showed that the risk of blindness being transmitted to the next generation was infinitesimally small.

Dr. Campbell, however, put the matter in a nutshell when he said "Blindness was a sufficient disadvantage in one person without being doubled by the partnership of two."

The actual proceedings of the Conference were concluded with an address by the Rev. N. F. NcNeile, and a few prayers.

The members owe a warm debt of gratitude to all those who acted as chairmen at the various meetings; to Dr. Campbell for inviting the members to the Queen's Hall Concert, which was such a great success, and in which Mr. Leonard Pegg gave promise of becoming such a great concerto player; to the managers of London Institutions for their hospitality; to the Rev. H. J. R. Marston for lending his Church, and to all those who shared in the arrangements of the preliminary service; and, last but not least, to the Committee of the Gardner's Trust for having arranged this Congress, and their unfailing courtesy in carrying it through.

What, then, has the Congress done? Have their proceedings ended in talk? We do not yet know, but there is no

reason to think so. The work has only begun, and will be carried on by Committees and future Conferences. Those who took part in the late gathering came in no party spirit, and made no attempt to settle any question off-hand. If, therefore, we have only succeeded in getting to know one another a little better, vast progress will have been made in furthering the cause which we all have at heart.

WALTER H. DIXSON.

RECENT LITERATURE.

During the past few months the following works have been stereotyped in Braille by the British and Foreign Blind Association, 33, Cambridge Square, Hyde Park, London, W.

		s.	d.
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Uncle Tom's Cabin, (interpointed) vols. i. and ii.	„	3	6
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